Greece consists of a mountainous, peninsular mainland jutting out into the sea at the southern end of the [Balkans](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Balkans), the [Peloponnesus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peloponnese) peninsula (separated from the mainland by the [canal](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Corinth_Canal) of the [Isthmus of Corinth](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Isthmus_of_Corinth)), and [numerous islands](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greek_islands) (1400, 227 of which are inhabited), including [Crete](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crete), [Euboea](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Euboea), [Lesbos](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lesbos_Island), [Chios](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chios), the [Dodecanese](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dodecanese) and the [Cycladic](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cyclades) groups of the [Aegean Sea](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aegean_Sea) as well as the [Ionian Sea](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ionian_Sea) islands. Greece has the [tenth longest coastline](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_countries_by_length_of_coastline) in the world with 14,880 km (9,246 mi); its land boundary is 1,160 km (721 mi).

Eighty percent of Greece consists of mountains or hills, making the country one of the most mountainous in Europe. [Mount Olympus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mount_Olympus_(Mountain)), a focal point of Greek culture throughout history culminates at Mytikas peak 2,917 m (9,570 ft), the highest in the country. Once considered the throne of the Gods, it is today extremely popular among hikers and climbers. Western Greece contains a number of lakes and wetlands and is dominated by the [Pindus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pindus) mountain range. The Pindus reaches a maximum elevation of 2,637 m (8,652 ft) at Mt. Smolikas and is essentially a prolongation of the [Dinaric Alps](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dinaric_Alps). The Vikos-Aoos Gorge is yet another spectacular formation and a popular hotspot for those fond of extreme sports.

The range continues through the central [Peloponnese](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peloponnese), crosses the islands of [Kythera](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kythera) and Antikythera and find its way into southwestern Aegean, in the island of [Crete](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crete) where it eventually ends. The islands of the Aegean are peaks of underwater mountains that once constituted an extension of the mainland. Pindus is characterized by its high, steep peaks, often dissected by numerous canyons and a variety of other karstic landscapes. Most notably, the impressive [Meteora](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Meteora) formation consisting of high, steep boulders provides a breathtaking experience for the hundreds of thousands of tourists who visit the area each year.

Northeastern Greece features another high-altitude mountain range, the Rhodope range, spreading across the periphery of [East Macedonia and Thrace](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/East_Macedonia_and_Thrace); this area is covered with vast, thick, ancient forests. The famous Dadia forest is in the prefecture of [Evros](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Evros_Prefecture), in the far northeast of the country.

Expansive plains are primarily located in the prefectures of [Thessaly](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thessaly), [Central Macedonia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Central_Macedonia) and [Thrace](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Western_Thrace). They constitute key economic regions as they are among the few arable places in the country. Rare marine species such as the Pinniped Seals and the [Loggerhead Sea Turtle](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Loggerhead_Sea_Turtle) live in the seas surrounding mainland Greece, while its dense forests are home to the endangered [brown bear](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brown_bear), the [lynx](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lynx), the [Roe Deer](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roe_Deer) and the Wild Goat.

[Phytogeographically](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Phytogeography), Greece belongs to the [Boreal Kingdom](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Boreal_Kingdom) and is shared between the East Mediterranean province of the [Mediterranean Region](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mediterranean_Region) and the Illyrian province of the [Circumboreal Region](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Circumboreal_Region). According to the [World Wide Fund for Nature](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_Wide_Fund_for_Nature) and the [European Environment Agency](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/European_Environment_Agency), the territory of Greece can be subdivided into six [ecoregions](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ecoregion): the [Illyrian deciduous forests](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Illyrian_deciduous_forests), [Pindus Mountains mixed forests](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pindus_Mountains_mixed_forests), [Balkan mixed forests](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Balkan_mixed_forests), Rodope montane mixed forests, Aegean and Western Turkey sclerophyllous and mixed forests and Crete Mediterranean forests.

**Climate**

*Main article:* [*Climate of Greece*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Climate_of_Greece)

View of [Mount Olympus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mount_Olympus_(Mountain)) from the town of [Litochoro](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Litochoro).

The climate of Greece can be categorised into three types (the Mediterranean, the Alpine and the Temperate) that influence well-defined regions of its territory. The Pindus mountain range strongly affects the climate of the country by making the western side of it (areas prone to the south-westerlies) wetter on average than the areas lying to the east of it ([lee side](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lee_side) of the mountains). The Mediterranean type of climate features mild, wet winters and hot, dry summers. The Cyclades, the [Dodecanese](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dodecanese), [Crete](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crete), Eastern Peloponessus and parts of the Sterea Ellada region are mostly affected by this particular type of climate. Temperatures rarely reach extreme values along the coasts, although, with Greece being a highly mountainous country, snowfalls occur frequently in winter. It sometimes snows even in the [Cyclades](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cyclades) or the [Dodecanese](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dodecanese).

The Alpine type is dominant mainly in the mountainous areas of Northwestern Greece ([Epirus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Epirus_(periphery)), [Central Greece](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Central_Greece), [Thessaly](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thessaly), [Western Macedonia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Western_Macedonia)) as well as in the central parts of [Peloponnese](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peloponnese), including the prefectures of [Achaia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Achaia), [Arcadia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arcadia) and parts of [Laconia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Laconia), where extensions of the Pindus mountain range pass by. Finally, the Temperate type affects [Central Macedonia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Central_Macedonia) and [East Macedonia and Thrace](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/East_Macedonia_and_Thrace); it features cold, damp winters and hot, dry summers. Athens is located in a transitional area featuring both the Mediterranean and the Temperate types. The city's northern suburbs are dominated by the temperate type while the downtown area and the southern suburbs enjoy a typical Mediterranean type.

Economy

*Main article:* [*Economy of Greece*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Economy_of_Greece)

GDP Growth of Greece compared to the [Eurozone](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eurozone) between 1996 and 2006.

Annual growth of Greek GDP has surpassed the respective levels of most of its [EU](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/EU) partners.[[28]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-27) The tourism industry is a major source of foreign exchange earnings and revenue accounting for 15% of Greece’s total GDP[[29]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-ciaecon-28) and employing, directly or indirectly, 16.5% of the total workforce.

The Greek labor force totals 4.9 million, and it is the second most industrious between [OECD](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/OECD) countries, after [South Korea](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/South_Korea).[[30]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-29) The [Groningen Growth & Development Centre](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/University_of_Groningen) has published a poll revealing that between 1995 and 2005, Greece was the country with the largest work/hour ratio among European nations; Greeks worked an average of 1,900 hours per year, followed by the Spanish (average of 1,800 hours/year).[[31]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-30) In 2007, the [average worker made around 20 dollars](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_countries_by_GDP_(PPP)_per_hour_worked), similar to Spain and slightly more than half of average U.S. hourly income. Immigrants make up nearly one-fifth of the work force, occupied mainly in agricultural and construction work.

[Greece's purchasing power-adjusted GDP per capita](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_countries_by_GDP_(PPP)_per_capita) is the world's 28th highest. According to the [International Monetary Fund](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International_Monetary_Fund) it has an estimated average per capita income of $30,661 for the year 2008,[[32]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-31) comparable to that of Germany, France or Italy. According to [Eurostat](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eurostat) data, Greek PPS GDP per capita stood at 95 per cent of the EU average in 2008.[[33]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-32) Greece ranks 18th in the 2006 [HDI](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Human_Development_Index),[[34]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-33) 22nd on [The Economist](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Economist)'s 2005 worldwide quality-of-life index.[[35]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-34) According to a survey by the Economist, the cost of living in Athens is close to 90% of the costs in New York; in rural regions it is lower.

**Maritime industry**

*Main articles:* [*Greek shipping*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greek_shipping) *and* [*List of ports in Greece*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_ports_in_Greece)

Aerial view of the central districts of [Thessaloniki](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thessaloniki), Greece's second largest city and a major economic and industrial center.

The shipping industry is a key element of Greek economic activity dating back to ancient times.[[36]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-shipping-35) Today, shipping is one of the country's most important industries. It accounts for 4.5% of [GDP](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gross_domestic_product), employs about 160,000 people (4% of the workforce), and represents 1/3 of the country's trade deficit.[[37]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-nbg-36)

During the 1960s, the size of the Greek fleet nearly doubled, primarily through the investment undertaken by the shipping magnates [Onassis](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aristotle_Onassis) and [Niarchos](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stavros_Niarchos).[[38]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-slate-37) The basis of the modern Greek maritime industry was formed after [World War II](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_War_II) when Greek shipping businessmen were able to amass surplus ships sold to them by the United States Government through the Ship Sales Act of the 1940s.[[38]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-slate-37) According to the [BTS](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bureau_of_Transportation_Statistics), the Greek-owned maritime fleet is today the largest in the world, with 3,079 vessels accounting for 18% of the world's fleet capacity (making it the largest of any other country) with a total [dwt](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dead_weight_tonnage) of 141,931 thousand (142 million dwt).[[39]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-BTS-38) In terms of ship categories, Greece ranks first in both [tankers](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tanker_(ship)) and dry [bulk carriers](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bulk_carrier), fourth in the number of [containers](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Container_ship), and fourth in other ships.[[39]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-BTS-38) However, today's fleet roster is smaller than an all-time high of 5,000 ships in the late 70's.[[36]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-shipping-35)

**Tourism**

*Main article:* [*Tourism in Greece*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tourism_in_Greece)

Elias Beach on the Greek island of Mykonos.

An important percentage of Greece's income comes from tourism. In 2004 Greece welcomed 16.5 million tourists. According to a survey conducted in [China](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/China) in 2005, Greece was voted as the Chinese people's number one choice as a tourist destination,[[40]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-39) and 6,088,287 tourists visited only the city of [Athens](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Athens), the capital city. In November 2006, Austria, like China, announced that Greece was the favourite destination.[[41]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-40)[[*dead link*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Dead_external_links)]

Numismatics

*Main article:* [*Greek euro coins*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greek_euro_coins)

*See also:* [*Euro gold and silver commemorative coins (Greece)*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Euro_gold_and_silver_commemorative_coins_(Greece))

In Greece, the [euro](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Euro) was introduced in 2002. As a preparation for this date, the minting of the new euro coins started as early as 2001, however all Greek euro coins introduced in 2002 have this year on it; unlike other countries of the [Eurozone](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eurozone) where mint year is minted in the coin. Eight different designs, one per face value, was selected for the Greek coins. In 2007, in order to adopt the new common map like the rest of the Eurozone countries, Greece changed the common side of their coins. Before adopting the Euro in 2002 Greece had maintained use of the [Greek drachma](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greek_drachma) from 1832.

Greece has one of the richest collections of collectors' coins in the Eurozone, with face value ranging from 10 to 200 euro, mainly issued to commemorate the 2004 Summer Olympics. These coins are a legacy of an old national practice of minting of silver and gold commemorative coins. Unlike normal issues, these coins are not legal tender in all the eurozone. For instance, a €10 Greek commemorative coin cannot be used in any other country.

Transport

The [Rio-Antirio bridge](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rio-Antirio_bridge) near the city of [Patras](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Patras) is the longest [cable-stayed bridge](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cable-stayed_bridge) in Europe and second in the world.

*Main article:* [*Transport in Greece*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Transport_in_Greece)

Since the 1980s, the roads and rail network of Greece has been significantly modernised. Important works include the [Egnatia highway](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Egnatia_Odos_(modern_road)) that connects north west Greece ([Igoumenitsa](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Igoumenitsa)) with northern and north west Greece. The [Rio-Antirio bridge](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rio-Antirio_bridge) (the longest suspension cable bridge in Europe) (2250 m long) connects the western [Peloponnesus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peloponnesus) from [Rio](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rio,_Greece) (7 km from [Patras](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Patras)) with [Antirion](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Antirion) on the central Greek mainland. An expansion of the Patras-Athens national motorway towards [Pyrgos](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pyrgos,_Ilia) in the western Peloponnese is scheduled to be completed by 2014. Most of the highway connection of Athens to Thessaloniki has also been upgraded.

The metropolitan area of the capital Athens had a new [international airport](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Athens_International_Airport) (opened in 2001), a new privately run suburban motorway [Attiki Odos](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Attiki_Odos) (opened 2001), and an expanded [metro system](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Athens_metro) (since 2000).

Most of the Greek islands and many main cities of Greece are connecting by air mainly from the two major airlines of Greece, Olympic and Aegean air. Maritime connections have been improved with modern high-speed craft, including [hydrofoils](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hydrofoils) and [catamarans](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Catamarans). Railway connections play a somewhat lesser role than in many other European countries, but railways too have been expanded, with new suburban connections around Athens, a modern intercity connection between Athens and Thessaloniki, and upgrading to double lines in many parts of the 2500 km network. International railway lines connect Greek cities with the rest of Europe, the [Balkans](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Balkans) and [Turkey](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Turkey).

Demographics

*Main articles:* [*Demographics of Greece*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Demographics_of_Greece) *and* [*Greeks*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greeks)

The [Hermoupolis](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hermoupolis) port in the island of [Syros](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Syros) is the capital of the [Cyclades](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cyclades).

The official Statistical body of Greece is the [National Statistical Service of Greece](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Statistical_Service_of_Greece) (NSSG). According to the NSSG, Greece's total population in 2001 was 10,964,020.[[42]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-nssg-41) That figure is divided into 5,427,682 males and 5,536,338 females.[[42]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-nssg-41) As statistics from 1971, 1981, and 2001 show, the Greek population has been aging the past several decades.[[42]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-nssg-41) The birth rate in 2003 stood 9.5 per 1,000 inhabitants (14.5 per 1,000 in 1981). At the same time the mortality rate increased slightly from 8.9 per 1,000 inhabitants in 1981 to 9.6 per 1,000 inhabitants in 2003. In 2001, 16.71% of the population were 65 years old and older, 68.12% between the ages of 15 and 64 years old, and 15.18% were 14 years old and younger.[[42]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-nssg-41) Greek society has also rapidly changed with the passage of time. Marriage rates kept falling from almost 71 per 1,000 inhabitants in 1981 until 2002, only to increase slightly in 2003 to 61 per 1,000 and then fall again to 51 in 2004.[[42]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-nssg-41) Divorce rates on the other hand, have seen an increase – from 191.2 per 1,000 marriages in 1991 to 239.5 per 1,000 marriages in 2004.[[42]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-nssg-41) Almost two-thirds of the [Greek people](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greeks) live in urban areas. Greece's largest municipalities in 2001 were: [Athens](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Athens), [Thessaloniki](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thessaloniki), [Piraeus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Piraeus), [Patras](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Patras), [Iraklio](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Iraklio), [Larissa](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Larissa), and [Volos](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Volos).[[43]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-cities-42)

Throughout the 20th century, millions of Greeks migrated to the US, Australia, Canada, UK and Germany, creating a thriving [Greek diaspora](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greek_diaspora) The migration trend however has now been reversed after the important improvements of the Greek economy since the 80's.

**Immigration**

Due to the complexity of Greek immigration policy, practices and data collection, truly reliable data on [immigrant populations](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Immigration_to_Greece) in Greece is difficult to gather and therefore subject to much speculation. In 1986, legal and unauthorized immigrants totaled approximately 90,000. A study from the [Mediterranean Migration Observatory](http://www.mmo.gr/) maintains that the 2001 Census from the NSSG recorded 762,191 persons residing in Greece without Greek citizenship, constituting around 7% of total population and that, of these, 48,560 were EU or [EFTA](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/EFTA) nationals and 17,426 Cypriots with privileged status. People from the Balkan countries of Albania, Bulgaria, and Romania make up almost two-thirds of the total foreign population. Migrants from the former Soviet Union (Georgia, Russia, Ukraine, Moldava, etc.) comprise 10% of the total.[[44]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-43)

The greatest cluster of non-EU immigrant population is in the Municipality of Athens –some 132,000 immigrants, at 17% of local population. Thessaloniki is the second largest cluster, with 27,000, reaching 7% of local population. After this, the predominant areas of location are the big cities environs and the agricultural areas. At the same time, [Albanians](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Albanians) constituted some 56% of total immigrants, followed by [Bulgarians](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bulgarians) (5%), [Georgians](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Georgians) (3%) and [Romanians](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Romanians) (3%). Americans, Cypriots, British and Germans appeared as sizeable foreign communities at around 2% each of total foreign population. The rest were around 690,000 persons of non-EU or non-homogeneis (of non-Greek heritage) status.

According to the same study, the foreign population (documented and undocumented) residing in Greece may in reality figure upwards to 8.5% or 10.3%, that is approximately meaning 1.15 million – if immigrants with *homogeneis* cards are accounted for.

**Religion**

*Main article:* [*Religion in Greece*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Religion_in_Greece)

[Holy Trinity monastery](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Holy_Trinity_monastery), in [Meteora](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Meteora), central Greece.

The constitution of Greece recognizes the Greek Orthodox faith as the "prevailing" religion of the country, while guaranteeing freedom of religious belief for all.[[24]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-con51.2C53-23) The Greek Government does not keep statistics on religious groups and censuses do not ask for religious affiliation. According to the State Department, an estimated 97% of Greek citizens identify themselves as [Greek Orthodox](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greek_Orthodox_Church).[[45]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-religion-44) However, in the [Eurostat](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eurostat) – Eurobarometer poll of 2005, 81% of Greek citizens responded that they *believe there is a God*,[[46]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-eurostat-45) which was the third highest percentage among [EU](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/European_Union) members behind only [Malta](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Malta) and [Cyprus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cyprus).[[46]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-eurostat-45)

Estimates of the recognized [Muslim minority](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Muslim_minority_of_Greece), which is mostly located in Thrace, range from 98,000 to 140,000,[[45]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-religion-44)[[47]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-religion2-46) (between 0.9% and 1.2%) while the immigrant Muslim community numbers between 200,000 and 300,000. Albanian immigrants to Greece (approximately 700,000) are usually associated with the Muslim faith, although most are [secular](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Secular) in orientation.[[48]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-47) In the [Treaty of Lausanne](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Treaty_of_Lausanne) Greece and Turkey agreed to [exchange minorities](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Population_exchange_between_Greece_and_Turkey). About 500,000 people were expelled from Greece, predominantly [Turks](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Turkish_people), but including other Muslim.[[49]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-48) [Judaism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Judaism) has [existed](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_the_Jews_in_Greece) in Greece for more than 2,000 years. [Sephardi Jews](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sephardi_Jews) used to have a large presence in the city of [Thessaloniki](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thessaloniki) (by 1900, some 80,000, or more than half of the population, were Jews),[[50]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-49) but nowadays the Greek-Jewish community who survived [the Holocaust](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Holocaust) is estimated to number around 5,500 people.[[45]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-religion-44)[[47]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-religion2-46)

Greek members of [Roman Catholic](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_Catholic_Church) faith are estimated at 50,000[[45]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-religion-44)[[47]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-religion2-46) with the Roman Catholic immigrant community approximating 200,000.[[45]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-religion-44) Old Calendarists account for 500,000 followers.[[47]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-religion2-46) [Protestants](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Protestants), including [Greek Evangelical Church](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greek_Evangelical_Church) and [Free Evangelical Churches](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Free_Evangelical_Churches), stand at about 30,000.[[45]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-religion-44)[[47]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-religion2-46) [Assemblies of God](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Assemblies_of_God), [International Church of the Foursquare Gospel](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International_Church_of_the_Foursquare_Gospel) and other [Pentecostal](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pentecostalism) churches of the [Greek Synod of Apostolic Church](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Greek_Synod_of_Apostolic_Church&action=edit&redlink=1) has 12,000 members.[[51]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-50) Independent [Free Apostolic Church of Pentecost](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Free_Apostolic_Church_of_Pentecost) is the biggest Protestant denomination in Greece with 120 churches.[[52]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-51) There are not official statistics about Free Apostolic Church of Pentecost, but the Orthodox Church estimates the followers in 20,000.[[53]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-52) The [Jehovah's Witnesses](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jehovah%27s_Witnesses) report having 28,243 active members.[[45]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-religion-44)[[47]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-religion2-46)[[54]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-53) There are also 653 [Mormons](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mormons),[[55]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-54) 501 [Seventh-day Adventists](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seventh-day_Adventist_Church),[[56]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-55) and 30 [Free Methodists](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Free_Methodists).[[45]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-religion-44)[[57]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-56)

The ancient Greek religion has also reappeared as [Hellenic Neopaganism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hellenic_Neopaganism),[[58]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-Polytheist_Comeback-57) with estimates of approximately 2,000 adherents (comprising 0.02% of the general population).[[59]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-Greek_polytheists-58)

**Languages**

*Main articles:* [*Languages of Greece*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Languages_of_Greece) *and* [*Minorities in Greece*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Minorities_in_Greece)

Greece is today relatively homogeneous in linguistic terms, with a large majority of the native population using [Greek](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greek_language) as their first or only language. The [Muslim minority](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Muslim_minority_of_Greece) in Thrace, which amounts to approximately 0.95% of the total population, consists of speakers of [Turkish](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Turkish_language), [Bulgarian](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bulgarian_language) ([Pomak](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pomaks)) and [Romani](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Romani_language). Romani is also spoken by Christian [Roma](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Romani_people) in other parts of the country.

Further minority languages have traditionally been spoken by regional population groups in various parts of the country. Their use has decreased radically in the course of the 20th century through assimilation with the Greek-speaking majority. This goes for the [Arvanites](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arvanites), an [Albanian](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Albanian_language)-speaking group mostly located in the rural areas around the capital Athens, and for the [Aromanians](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aromanians) and [Moglenites](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Megleno-Romanians), also known as [Vlachs](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vlachs), whose language is closely related to [Romanian](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Romanian_language) and who used to live scattered across several areas of mountaneous central Greece. Members of these groups ethnically identify as Greeks[[60]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-59) and are today all at least bilingual in Greek. In many areas their traditional languages are today only maintained by the older generations and are on the verge of extinction.

Near the northern Greek borders there are also some [Slavic](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Slavic_languages)-speaking groups, whose members identify ethnically as Greeks in their majority. Their dialects can be linguistically classified as forms of either [Macedonian](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Macedonian_language) (locally called *Slavomacedonian* or simply *Slavic*), or [Bulgarian](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bulgarian_language) (distinguished as *Pomak* in the case of the Bulgarophone Muslims of Thrace.[[61]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-60)

The Jewish community in Greece traditionally spoke [Ladino](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ladino_language) (Judeo-Spanish), today maintained only by a small group of a few thousand speakers.

Among the Greek-speaking population, speakers of the distinctive [Pontic](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pontic_Greek) dialect came to Greece from Asia Minor after the [Greek genocide](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greek_genocide) and constitute a sizable group.

Education

*Main article:* [*Education in Greece*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Education_in_Greece)

The building of the Faculty of Education at the [Aristotle University of Thessaloniki](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aristotle_University_of_Thessaloniki).

Compulsory education in Greece comprises [primary schools](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Primary_school) (Δημοτικό Σχολείο, *Dimotikó Scholeio*) and [gymnasium](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gymnasium_(school)) (Γυμνάσιο). [Nursery schools](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nursery_school) (Παιδικός σταθμός, *Paidikós Stathmós*) are popular but not compulsory. [Kindergartens](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kindergarten) (Νηπιαγωγείο, *Nipiagogeío*) are now compulsory for any child above 4 years of age. Children start primary school aged 6 and remain there for six years. Attendance at gymnasia starts at age 12 and last for three years. Greece's post-compulsory secondary education consists of two school types: unified upper [secondary schools](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Secondary_school) (Ενιαίο Λύκειο, *Eniaia Lykeia*) and [technical](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Technical_school)–[vocational](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vocational_school) educational schools (Τεχνικά και Επαγγελματικά Εκπαιδευτήρια, "TEE"). Post-compulsory secondary education also includes vocational training institutes (Ινστιτούτα Επαγγελματικής Κατάρτισης, "IEK") which provide a formal but unclassified level of education. As they can accept both *Gymnasio* (lower secondary school) and *Lykeio* (upper secondary school) graduates, these institutes are not classified as offering a particular level of education.

Public higher education is divided into [universities](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/University), "Highest Educational Institutions" (Ανώτατα Εκπαιδευτικά Ιδρύματα, *Anótata Ekpaideytiká Idrýmata*, "ΑΕΙ") and "Highest Technological Educational Institutions" (Ανώτατα Τεχνολογικά Εκπαιδευτικά Ιδρύματα, *Anótata Technologiká Ekpaideytiká Idrýmata*, "ATEI"). Students are admitted to these Institutes according to their performance at national level examinations taking place after completion of the third grade of *Lykeio*. Additionally, students over twenty-two years old may be admitted to the [Hellenic Open University](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hellenic_Open_University) through a form of lottery. The [Capodistrian university of Athens](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_and_Capodistrian_University_of_Athens) is the oldest university in the eastern Mediterranean.

The Greek education system also provides special kindergartens, primary and secondary schools for people with special needs or difficulties in learning. Specialist gymnasia and high schools offering musical, theological and physical education also exist.

Some of the main universities in Greece include:

[National and Capodistrian University of Athens](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_and_Capodistrian_University_of_Athens) • [National Technical University of Athens](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Technical_University_of_Athens)  • [University of Piraeus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/University_of_Piraeus) • [Agricultural University of Athens](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Agricultural_University_of_Athens)  • [University of Macedonia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/University_of_Macedonia) (in Thessaloniki)  • [University of Crete](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/University_of_Crete)  • [Technical University of Crete](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Technical_University_of_Crete)  • [Athens University of Economics and Business](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Athens_University_of_Economics_and_Business)  • [Aristotle University of Thessaloniki](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aristotle_University_of_Thessaloniki)  • [University of the Aegean](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/University_of_the_Aegean) (across the [Aegean Islands](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aegean_Islands))  • [Democritus University of Thrace](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Democritus_University_of_Thrace)  • [University of Ioannina](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/University_of_Ioannina)  • [University of Thessaly](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/University_of_Thessaly)  • [University of Western Macedonia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/University_of_Western_Macedonia)  • [Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Panteion_University_of_Social_and_Political_Sciences)  • [University of Patras](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/University_of_Patras)  • Charokopeio University of Athens • [Ionian University](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ionian_University) (across the [Ionian Islands](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ionian_Islands))

Culture

*Main articles:* [*Culture of Greece*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Culture_of_Greece) *and* [*List of Greeks*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Greeks)

The ancient theatre of [Epidaurus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Epidaurus) is nowadays used for staging ancient Greek drama shows

[Dionysios Solomos](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dionysios_Solomos)(1798–1857), national poet. His [Hymn to Liberty](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hymn_to_Liberty) became the Greek [anthem](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anthem)

The culture of Greece has evolved over thousands of years, with its beginnings in [the Mycenaean and Minoan Civilizations](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mycenaean_Greece), continuing most notably into [Classical Greece](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Classical_Greece), the [Hellenistic Period](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hellenistic_Period), through the influence of the [Roman Empire](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_Empire) and its [Greek Eastern](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greek_East) successor the [Byzantine Empire](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Byzantine_Empire). The [Ottoman Empire](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ottoman_Empire) too had a significant influence on Greek culture, but the [Greek War of Independence](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greek_War_of_Independence) is credited with revitalizing Greece and giving birth to a single entity of its multi-faceted culture throughout the ages.

**Philosophy**

*Main articles:* [*Greek Philosophy*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greek_Philosophy) *and* [*Greek Literature*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greek_Literature)

Most western philosophical traditions began in ancient Greece in the 6th century bc. The first philosophers are called "[Presocratics](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Presocratics)" which designates that they came before [Socrates](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Socrates). The Presocratics were from the western or the eastern regions of the Greece and only fragments of the original writings of the presocratics survive, in some cases merely a single sentence. A new period of philosophy started with Socrates the [Athenian](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Athenian), like the [Sophists](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sophists), he rejected entirely the physical speculations in which his predecessors had indulged, and made the thoughts and opinions of people his starting-point. Aspects of Socrates were first united from [Plato](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plato), who also combined with them many of the principles established by earlier philosophers, and developed the whole of this material into the unity of a comprehensive system. [Aristotle](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aristotle) of [Stagira](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stagira) the most important disciple of Plato shared with his teacher the title of the greatest philosopher of antiquity but while Plato had sought to elucidate and explain things from the supra-sensual standpoint of the forms, his pupil preferred to start from the facts given us by experience. Except from these three most significant Greek philosophers other known schools of [Greek philosophy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greek_philosophy) from other founders during ancient times were [Stoicism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stoicism), [Epicureanism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Epicureanism), [Skepticism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Skepticism) and [Neoplatonism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Neoplatonism)[[62]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-61)

**Science and technology**

Thessaloniki Science Center & Technology Museum.

Broadband internet availability is widespread in Greece; approximately 15.6% of the general population have broadband connections to the internet,[[63]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-62)[[64]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-63) mainly ADSL2. [Internet cafes](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Internet_cafes) that provide net access, office applications and multiplayer gaming are also a common sight in the country, while mobile internet on [3G](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/3G) cellphone networks and public wi-fi hotspots are existent, but not as extensive.

Because of its strategic location, qualified workforce and political and economic stability, many multinational companies such as [Ericsson](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ericsson), [Siemens](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Siemens_AG), [SAP](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/SAP_AG), [Motorola](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Motorola) and [Coca-Cola](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coca-Cola) have their regional R&D Headquarters in Greece.

The [General Secretariat for Research and Technology](http://www.gsrt.gr/default.asp?V_LANG_ID=2,) of the [Hellenic Ministry of Development](http://www.ypan.gr/index_uk_c_cms.htm) is responsible for designing, implementing and supervising national research and technological policy.

In 2003, public spending on R&D was 456.37 million euros (12.6% increase from 2002). Total research and development (R&D) spending (both public and private) as a percentage of GDP has increased considerably since the beginning of the past decade, from 0.38% in 1989, to 0.65% in 2001. R&D spending in Greece remains lower than the EU average of 1.93%, but, according to Research DC, based on OECD and Eurostat data, between 1990 and 1998, total R&D expenditure in Greece enjoyed the third highest increase in Europe, after Finland and Ireland.

Greece's technology parks with incubator facilities include [the Science and Technology Park of Crete](http://www.stepc.gr/) (Heraklion), the [Thessaloniki Technology Park](http://www.thestep.gr/), the [Lavrio Technology Park](http://www.ltp.ntua.gr/) and the [Patras Science Park](http://www.psp.org.gr/apps/en/spag/).Greece has been a member of the [European Space Agency](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/European_Space_Agency) (ESA) since 2005.[[12]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-ESA-11) Cooperation between ESA and the Hellenic National Space Committee began in the early 1990s. In 1994, Greece and ESA signed their first cooperation agreement. Having formally applied for full membership in 2003, Greece became ESA's sixteenth member on 16 March 2005. As member of the ESA, Greece participates in the agency's telecommunication and technology activities, and the [Global Monitoring for Environment and Security](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Global_Monitoring_for_Environment_and_Security) Initiative.

**Cuisine**

[Greek salad](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greek_salad) with additional ingredients.

*Main article:* [*Greek cuisine*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greek_cuisine)

[Greek cuisine](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greek_cuisine) is often cited as an example of the healthy [Mediterranean diet](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mediterranean_diet). Greek cuisine incorporates fresh ingredients into a variety of local dishes such as [moussaka](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moussaka), [stifado](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stifado), [Greek Salad](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greek_Salad), [spanakopita](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spanakopita) and the world famous [Souvlaki](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Souvlaki). Some dishes can be traced back to ancient Greece like [skordalia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Skordalia) (a thick purée of potatoes, walnuts, almonds, crushed garlic and olive oil), [lentil](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lentil) [soup](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Soup), [retsina](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Retsina) (white or rosé wine sealed with pine resin) and pasteli (candy bar with sesame seeds baked with honey). Throughout Greece people often enjoy eating from small dishes such as [meze](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Meze) with various dips such as [tzatziki](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tzatziki), grilled [octopus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Octopus) and small [fish](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fish), [feta cheese](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Feta_cheese), [dolmades](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dolmades) (rice, currants and pine kernels wrapped in vine leaves), various [pulses](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pulses), [olives](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Olive) and [cheese](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cheese). [Olive oil](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Olive_oil) is added to almost every dish. Sweet desserts such as [galaktoboureko](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Galaktoboureko), and drinks such as [ouzo](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ouzo), [metaxa](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Metaxa) and a variety of [wines](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wine) including [retsina](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Retsina). Greek cuisine differs widely from different parts of the mainland and from island to island also uses some flavorings more often than other Mediterranean cuisines do: [oregano](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oregano), [mint](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mint), [garlic](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Garlic), [onion](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Onion), [dill](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dill) and [bay laurel](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bay_laurel) leaves. Other common herbs and spices include [basil](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Basil), [thyme](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thyme) and [fennel](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fennel) seed. Many Greek recipes, especially in the northern parts of the country, use "sweet" spices in combination with meat, for example [cinnamon](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cinnamon) and [cloves](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cloves) in stews.

**Music**

*Main article:* [*Greek music*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greek_music)

[Mikis Theodorakis](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mikis_Theodorakis), one of the most popular Greek composers

Greek music extends far back into Ancient times were mixed-gender choruses performed for entertainment, celebration and spiritual reasons, instruments during that time period included the double-reed [aulos](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aulos) and the plucked string instrument, the [lyre](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lyre), especially the special kind called a [kithara](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kithara). Music played an important role in the education system during ancient times were boys taught music from the age of six. Later it was influences from the [Roman Empire](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_Empire), Eastern Europe and the [Byzantine Empire](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Byzantine_Empire) that changed Greek music. While the new technique of polyphony was developing in the West, the [Eastern Orthodox Church](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eastern_Orthodox_Church) resisted any type of change. Therefore, [Byzantine music](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Byzantine_music) remained monophonic and without any form of instrumental accompaniment. As a result, Byzantine music was deprived of polyphony and instrumental accompaniment, elements of which in the West encouraged an unimpeded development of art. However, the isolation of [Byzantium](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Byzantium), which kept music away from polyphony, along with centuries of continuous culture, enabled monophonic music to develop to the greatest heights of perfection. Byzantium presented with a melodic treasury of inestimable value for its rhythmical variety and expressive power the monophonic [Byzantine chant](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Byzantine_chant).

Along with the Byzantine chant, a form of artistic musical creation, the Greek people also cultivated the [Greek folk song](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greek_folk_music) which is divided into two cycles, the [akritic](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Acritic_songs) and [klephtic](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Klephtic_song). The akritic was created between the 9th and 10th centuries A.D. and expressed the life and struggles of the [akrites](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Akrites) (frontier guards) of the Byzantine empire, the most well known being the stories associated with [Digenes Akritas](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Digenis_Acritas). The klephtic cycle came into being between the late Byzantine period and the start of the [Greek War of Independence](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greek_War_of_Independence) struggle in 1821. The klephtic cycle, together with historical songs, paraloghes (narrative song or ballad), love songs, wedding songs, songs of exile and dirges express the life of the Greeks. There is a unity between the Greek people's struggles for freedom, their joys and sorrow and attitudes towards love and death.

The Second World War, German occupation of Greece and the Greek Civil War decisively influenced the Greek folk song. After the first World War and the 1922 debacle, the trend towards urban living focused on Athens where popular musicians congregated and, in 1928, founded their own professional society: the Athens and Piraeus Musicians Society. Until the early years of this century, musical tradition was preserved in the villages where there was little contact with the outside world. The events and social changes of the 20th century changed the fate of the folk song in Greece. Once the seat of folk song was the village, now the reverse applies. The commercialized folk song spreads in all directions to the remotest villages. The authentic songs and dances have been replaced by the stylized modern "folk songs" written by contemporary musicians which they write new lyrics to authentic folk tunes, changing them enough to ensure copyright protection.

**Sports**

Inside the [Athens Olympic Stadium](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Athens_Olympic_Stadium).

*Main article:* [*Sport in Greece*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sport_in_Greece)

Greece, home to the first modern Olympics, holds a long tradition in sports. The [Greek national football team](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece_national_football_team), currently ranked 12th in the [world](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/FIFA_World_Rankings),[[65]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-64) won the [UEFA Euro 2004](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/UEFA_Euro_2004) in one of the biggest surprises in the history of the sport.[[66]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-Euro2004-65) The [Greek Super League](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Super_League_Greece) is the highest professional football league in the country comprising of 16 teams. The most successful of them are [Olympiacos](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Olympiacos_F.C.), [Panathinaikos](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Panathinaikos_FC) and [AEK Athens](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/AEK_Athens_F.C.). The [Greek national basketball team](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece_national_basketball_team) has a decades-long tradition of excellence in the sport. As of August 2008 it is ranked 4th in the [world](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/FIBA_World_Rankings).[[67]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-66) They have won the [European Championship](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/EuroBasket) twice in [1987](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/EuroBasket_1987) and [2005](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/EuroBasket_2005),[[68]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-67) and have reached the final four in three of the last four [FIBA World Championships](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/FIBA_World_Championship), taking the second place in 2006. The domestic top basketball league, [A1 Ethniki](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/A1_Ethniki), is composed of fourteen teams. The most successful Greek teams are [Panathinaikos](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Panathinaikos_BC), [Olympiacos](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Olympiacos_B.C.), [Aris](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aris_BC), [AEK Athens](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/AEK_Athens_B.C.) and [PAOK](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/PAOK_Thessaloniki_B.C.). [Water polo](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Water_polo) and [volleyball](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Volleyball) are also practiced widely in Greece while [cricket](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cricket), [handball](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Team_handball) are relatively popular in [Corfu](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Corfu) and [Veroia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Veroia) respectively. As the birth place of the [Olympic Games](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Olympic_Games), Greece was most recently host of [2004 Summer Olympics](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2004_Summer_Olympics) and the first [modern Olympics](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1896_Summer_Olympics) in 1896.

In 2009, Greece beat [France](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/France) in the [under-20 European Basketball championship](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/FIBA_Europe_Under-20_Championship).[[69]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-68)

Greece was the first area in Europe where advanced early civilizations emerged, beginning with the [Minoan civilization](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Minoan_civilization) in Crete and then the [Mycenean](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mycenae) civilization on the mainland. Later, [city-states](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/City-states) emerged across the Greek peninsula and spread to the shores of [Black Sea](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Black_Sea), [South Italy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Magna_Grecia) and [Asia Minor](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Asia_Minor) reaching great levels of [prosperity](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wealth) that resulted in an unprecedented cultural boom, expressed in [architecture](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parthenon), [drama](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Drama), [science](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Science) and [philosophy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philosophy), and nurtured in [Athens](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Classical_Athens) under a [democratic](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Democracy) environment. [Athens](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Athens) and [Sparta](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sparta) led the way in repelling the [Persian Empire](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Achaemenid_Empire) in a series of [battles](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greco-Persian_Wars). Both were later overshadowed by [Thebes](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ancient_Thebes_(Boeotia)) and eventually [Macedon](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Macedon), with the latter under the guidance of [Alexander the Great](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alexander_the_Great) uniting and leading the Greek world to victory over the Persians, to presage the [Hellenistic era](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hellenistic_era),[[13]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-12) itself brought only partially to a close two centuries later with the establishment of [Roman](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_Republic) rule over Greek lands in 146 BC. Many Greeks migrated to [Alexandria](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alexandria), [Antioch](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Antioch), [Seleucia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seleucia) and the many other new Hellenistic cities in [Asia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seleucid_Empire) and [Africa](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ptolemaic_Kingdom) founded in Alexander's wake.[[14]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-13)

The subsequent mixture of [Roman](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ancient_Rome) and Hellenic cultures took form in the establishment of the [Byzantine Empire](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Byzantine_Empire) in 330 AD around [Constantinople](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Constantinople), which remained a major cultural and military power for the next 1,123 years, until [its fall](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fall_of_Constantinople) at the hands of [Ottomans](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Byzantine%E2%80%93Ottoman_Wars) in 1453. On the eve of the Ottoman era much of the Greek intelligentsia migrated to the Italian territories and much of non-Ottoman occupied Europe, playing a significant role in the [Western European Renaissance](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Renaissance) through the transferring of works of [Ancient Greeks](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ancient_Greeks) to [Western Europe](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Western_Europe).[[15]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-14) Nevertheless, the [Ottoman millet](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Millet_(Ottoman_Empire)) system contributed to the cohesion of the Orthodox Greeks by segregating the various peoples within the [Ottoman Empire](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ottoman_Empire) based on religion, as the latter played an integral role in the formation of modern 

After the [Greek War of Independence](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greek_War_of_Independence), successfully fought against the [Ottoman Empire](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ottoman_Empire) from 1821 to 1829, the nascent Greek state was finally recognized under the [London Protocol](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/London_Protocol). In 1827, [Ioannis Kapodistrias](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ioannis_Kapodistrias), from [Ionian Islands](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ionian_Islands), was chosen as the first governor of the new Republic. However, following his assassination, the [Great Powers](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Great_Powers) installed a [monarchy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kingdom_of_Greece) under [Otto](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Otto_of_Greece), of the Bavarian [House of Wittelsbach](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/House_of_Wittelsbach). In 1843, an uprising forced the King to grant a constitution and a representative assembly. Due to his unimpaired authoritarian rule, he was eventually dethroned in 1863 and replaced by Prince Vilhelm (William) of Denmark, who took the name [George I](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_I_of_Greece) and brought with him the [Ionian Islands](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ionian_Islands) as a coronation gift from [Britain](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_Kingdom). In 1877, [Charilaos Trikoupis](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charilaos_Trikoupis), who is attributed with the significant improvement of the country's infrastructure, curbed the power of the monarchy to interfere in the assembly by issuing the rule of [vote of confidence](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vote_of_confidence) to any potential [prime minister](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prime_minister).

25 March 1821: [Germanos of Patras](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Germanos_of_Patras), blessing the [Greek flag](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greek_flag) at [Agia Lavra](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Agia_Lavra). Painted by [Theodoros Vryzakis](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Theodoros_Vryzakis),1865.

As a result of the [Balkan Wars](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Balkan_Wars), Greece successfully increased the extent of her territory and population, a challenging context both socially and economically. In the following years, the struggle between [King Constantine I](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Constantine_I_of_Greece) and charismatic Prime Minister [Eleftherios Venizelos](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eleftherios_Venizelos) over the country's foreign policy on the eve of [World War I](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_War_I) dominated the country's political scene, and divided the country into [two opposed groups](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Schism).

In the aftermath of WWI, Greece [fought](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greco-Turkish_War_(1919-1922)) against Turkish nationalists led by [Mustafa Kemal](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mustafa_Kemal_Atat%C3%BCrk), a war which resulted in a massive population exchange between the two countries under the [Treaty of Lausanne](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Treaty_of_Lausanne).[[16]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-15) According to various sources,[[17]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-16) several hundred thousand [Pontic Greeks](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pontic_Greeks) died during this period.[[18]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-17) Instability and successive [coups d'état](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coup_d%27%C3%A9tat) marked the following era, which was overshadowed by the massive task of incorporating 1.5 million [Greek refugees](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greek_refugees) from Asia Minor into Greek society. The Greek population in [Istanbul](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Istanbul) had shrunk from 300,000 at the turn of the century to around 3,000 in the city today.[[19]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-18) On 28 October 1940 Fascist [Italy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kingdom_of_Italy_(1861%E2%80%931946)) demanded the surrender of Greece, but Greek dictator [Ioannis Metaxas](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ioannis_Metaxas) refused and in the following [Greco-Italian War](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greco-Italian_War), Greece repelled Italian forces into [Albania](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Albania), giving the [Allies](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Allies_of_World_War_II) their first victory over [Axis](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Axis_powers) forces on land. The country would eventually fall to urgently dispatched German forces during the [Battle of Greece](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Greece). The German occupiers nevertheless met serious challenges from the [Greek Resistance](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greek_Resistance). Over 100,000 civilians died from starvation during the winter of 1941–42. In 1943 virtually the entire [Jewish](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_the_Jews_in_Greece) population was deported to Nazi extermination camps.[[20]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-19)

After liberation, Greece experienced a bitter [civil war](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greek_Civil_War) between [Royalist](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Monarchism) and [Communist](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Communist) forces, which led to economic devastation and severe social tensions between its [Rightists](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rightists) and largely Communist [Leftists](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leftists) for the next 30 years.[[21]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-20) The next 20 years were characterized by marginalisation of the left in the political and social spheres but also by a significant economic growth, propelled in part by the [Marshall Plan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marshall_Plan).

In 1965, a period of political turbulence led to a coup d’etat on 21 April 1967 by the US-backed [Regime of the Colonels](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greek_military_junta_of_1967-1974). On November 1973 the [Athens Polytechnic Uprising](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Athens_Polytechnic_Uprising) sent shock waves across the regime, and a counter-coup established [Brigadier](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brigadier) [Dimitrios Ioannides](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dimitrios_Ioannides) as dictator. On 20 July 1974, as [Turkey](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Turkey) [invaded](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Turkish_invasion_of_Cyprus) the island of [Cyprus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cyprus), the regime collapsed.

[King Constantine](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/King_Constantine) (center) and [Eleftherios Venizelos](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eleftherios_Venizelos)(seated, with back to camera) in 1913, during the [Balkan Wars](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Balkan_Wars)

Former premier [Constantine Karamanlis](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Constantine_Karamanlis) was invited back from [Paris](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paris) where he had lived in self-exile since 1963, marking the beginning of the [Metapolitefsi](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Metapolitefsi) era. On the 14 August 1974 Greek forces withdrew from the integrated military structure of NATO in protest at the Turkish occupation of northern Cyprus.[[22]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-autogenerated2-21)[[23]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-22) In 1975 a democratic republican constitution was activated and the monarchy abolished by a referendum held that same year. Meanwhile, [Andreas Papandreou](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Andreas_Papandreou) founded the Panhellenic Socialist Party, or [PASOK](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Panhellenic_Socialist_Movement), in response to [Constantine Karamanlis](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Constantine_Karamanlis)' [New Democracy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_Democracy_(Greece)) party, with the two political formations dominating Greek political affairs in the ensuing decades. Greece rejoined [NATO](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/NATO) in 1980.[[22]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-autogenerated2-21) Relations with neighbouring Turkey have improved substantially over the last decade, since successive earthquakes hit both nations in the summer of 1999 (see [Greece-Turkey earthquake diplomacy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greek-Turkish_earthquake_diplomacy)), and today Athens is an active supporter of Turkey's bid for EU membership.

Greece became the tenth member of the [European Union](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/European_Union) on 1 January 1981, and ever since the nation has experienced a remarkable and sustained economic growth. Widespread investments in industrial enterprises and heavy infrastructure, as well as funds from the European Union and growing revenues from tourism, shipping and a fast growing service sector have raised the country's standard of living to unprecedented levels. The country adopted the [Euro](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Euro) in 2001 and successfully organised the [2004 Olympic Games](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2004_Olympic_Games) in [Athens](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Athens).Government and politics

*Main articles:* [*Politics of Greece*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Politics_of_Greece) *and* [*List of political parties in Greece*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_political_parties_in_Greece)

The [Hellenic Parliament](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hellenic_Parliament) in central Athens.

Greece is a [parliamentary republic](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parliamentary_republic).[[24]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-con51.2C53-23) The nominal [head of state](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Head_of_state) is the [President of the Republic](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/President_of_Greece), who is elected by the [Parliament](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hellenic_Parliament) for a five-year term.[[24]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-con51.2C53-23) The current [Constitution](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Constitution_of_Greece) was drawn up and adopted by the Fifth Revisionary Parliament of the Hellenes and entered into force in 1975 after the fall of the [military junta of 1967–1974](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greek_military_junta_of_1967-1974). It has been revised twice since, in 1986 and in [2001](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greek_Constitutional_amendment_of_2001). The Constitution, which consists of 120 articles, provides for a [separation of powers](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Separation_of_powers) into [executive](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Executive_branch), [legislative](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Legislative_branch), and [judicial branches](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Judicial_branch), and grants extensive specific guarantees (further reinforced in 2001) of [civil liberties](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Civil_liberties) and [social rights](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_rights).[[25]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-24) [Women's suffrage](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Women%27s_suffrage) was guaranteed with a [1952](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1952) Constitutional amendment.

According to the Constitution, executive power is exercised by the President of the Republic and the [Government](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cabinet_of_Greece).[[24]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-con51.2C53-23) From the [Constitutional amendment of 1986](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greek_Constitutional_amendment_of_1986) the President's duties were curtailed to a significant extent, and they are now largely ceremonial; most political power thus lies in the hands of the Prime Minister.[[26]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-M477-478-25) The position of [Prime Minister](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prime_Minister_of_Greece), Greece's [head of government](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Head_of_government), belongs to the [current leader](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Prime_Ministers_of_Greece) of the [political party](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_political_parties_in_Greece) that can obtain a vote of confidence by the Parliament. The President of the Republic formally appoints the Prime Minister and, on his recommendation, appoints and dismisses the other members of the Cabinet.[[24]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-con51.2C53-23)

Legislative power is exercised by a 300-member elective [unicameral Parliament](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Unicameralism).[[24]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-con51.2C53-23) Statutes passed by the Parliament are promulgated by the President of the Republic.[[24]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-con51.2C53-23) [Parliamentary elections](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elections_in_Greece#Election_of_the_legislature) are held every four years, but the President of the Republic is obliged to dissolve the Parliament earlier on the proposal of the Cabinet, in view of dealing with a national issue of exceptional importance.[[24]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-con51.2C53-23) The President is also obliged to dissolve the Parliament earlier, if the opposition manages to pass a [motion of no confidence](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Motion_of_no_confidence).[[24]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece#cite_note-con51.2C53-23)

The [Judiciary](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Judicial_system_of_Greece) is independent of the executive and the legislature and comprises three Supreme Courts: the [Court of Cassation](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Court_of_Cassation_(Greece)) (Άρειος Πάγος), the [Council of State](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Council_of_State_(Greece)) (Συμβούλιο της Επικρατείας) and the [Court of Auditors](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chamber_of_Accounts_(Greece)) (Ελεγκτικό Συνέδριο). The Judiciary system is also composed of civil courts, which judge civil and penal cases and administrative courts, which judge disputes between the citizens and the Greek administrative authorities.

Capital: Athens

[Athens](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Athens)

[Thessaloniki](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thessaloniki)

[Piraeus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Piraeus)

[Patras](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Patras)

[Heraklion](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Heraklion)

[Volos](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Volos)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Rank** | **City** | **Census 1991** | **Census 2001** | **Calculation 2007** | [**Periphery**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peripheries_of_Greece) |
| 1 | [Athens](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Athens)1 | 772,072 | 745,514 | 720,979 | [Attica](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Attica) |
| 2 | [Thessaloniki](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thessaloniki)2 | 383,967 | 363,987 | 348,920 | [Central Macedonia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Central_Macedonia) |
| 3 | [*Piraeus*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Piraeus)*1,3* | 182,671 | 175,697 | 170,715 | [Attica](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Attica) |
| 4 | [Patras](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Patras) | 152,570 | 160,400 | 164,741 | [West Greece](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/West_Greece) |
| 5 | [Heraklion](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Heraklion) | 115,270 | 130,914 | 140,357 | [Crete](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crete) |
| 6 | [*Peristeri*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peristeri)*1* | 137,288 | 137,918 | 137,472 | [Attica](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Attica) |
| 7 | [Larissa](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Larissa) | 112,777 | 124,394 | 130,946 | [Thessaly](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thessaly) |
| 8 | [*Kallithea*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kallithea)*1* | 114,233 | 109,609 | 106,757 | [Attica](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Attica) |
| 9 | [*Nikaia*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nikaia,_Attica)*1,3* | 87,597 | 95,403 | 94,608 | [Attica](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Attica) |
| 10 | [*Kalamaria*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kalamaria)*2* | 80,698 | 87,255 | 93,584 | [Central Macedonia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Central_Macedonia) |
| 11 | [*Glyfada*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Glyfada)*1* | 63,306 | 80,409 | 92,785 | [Attica](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Attica) |
| 12 | [*Acharnes*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Acharnes)*1* | 61,052 | 75,329 | 86,033 | [Attica](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Attica) |
| 13 | [Volos](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Volos) | 77,192 | 82,439 | 85,394 | [Thessaly](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thessaly) |
| 14 | [*Ilio*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ilio,_Greece)*1* | 78,326 | 80,859 | 81,997 | [Attica](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Attica) |
| 15 | [*Keratsini*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Keratsini)*1,3* | 71,982 | 76,102 | 77,803 | [Attica](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Attica) |
| 16 | [*Ilioupoli*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ilioupoli)*1* | 75,037 | 75,904 | 76,508 | [Attica](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Attica) |
| 17 | [*Nea Smyrni*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nea_Smyrni)*1* | 69,749 | 73,986 | 76,132 | [Attica](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Attica) |
| 18 | [*Chalandri*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chalandri)*1* | 66,285 | 71,684 | 75,418 | [Attica](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Attica) |
| 19 | [*Marousi*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marousi)*1* | 64,092 | 69,470 | 73,643 | [Attica](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Attica) |
| 20 | [*Zografou*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zografou)*1* | 80,492 | 76,115 | 73,472 | [Attica](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Attica) |
| 21 | [*Aigaleo*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aigaleo)*1* | 78,563 | 74,046 | 71,397 | [Attica](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Attica) |
| 22 | [*Agios Dimitrios*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Agios_Dimitrios)*1* | 57,574 | 65,173 | 69,692 | [Attica](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Attica) |
| 23 | [*Korydallos*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Korydallos)*1,3* | 63,184 | 67,456 | 69,616 | [Attica](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Attica) |
| 24 | [*Evosmos*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Evosmos)*2* | 28,821 | 52,624 | 69,590 | [Central Macedonia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Central_Macedonia) |
| 25 | [*Nea Ionia*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nea_Ionia)*1* | 60,635 | 66,017 | 68,772 | [Attica](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Attica) |
| 26 | [*Palaio Faliro*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Palaio_Faliro)*1* | 61,371 | 64,759 | 67,001 | [Attica](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Attica) |
| 27 | [Ioannina](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ioannina) | 56,699 | 61,629 | 65,147 | [Epirus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Epirus_(periphery)) |
| 28 | [*Agia Paraskevi*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Agia_Paraskevi)*1* | 47,463 | 56,836 | 62,695 | [Attica](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Attica) |
| 29 | [*Vyronas*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vyronas)*1* | 58,523 | 61,102 | 62,269 | [Attica](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Attica) |
| 30 | [Kavala](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kavala) | 56,571 | 58,663 | 59,516 | [East Macedonia and Thrace](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/East_Macedonia_and_Thrace) |
| 31 | [*Galatsi*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Galatsi)*1* | 57,230 | 58,042 | 58,834 | [Attica](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Attica) |
| 32 | [Rhodes](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rhodes,_Greece) | 42,400 | 52,318 | 58,197 | [South Aegean](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/South_Aegean) |
| 33 | [Serres](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Serres,_Greece) | 50,017 | 54,266 | 56,694 | [Central Macedonia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Central_Macedonia) |
| 34 | [Alexandroupoli](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alexandroupoli) | 37,904 | 48,885 | 55,183 | [East Macedonia and Thrace](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/East_Macedonia_and_Thrace) |
| 35 | [Chania](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chania) | 50,077 | 53,373 | 55,143 | [Crete](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crete) |
| 36 | [Chalcis](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chalcis) | 51,646 | 53,584 | 54,981 | [Central Greece](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Central_Greece) |
| 37 | [*Petroupoli*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Petroupoli)*1* | 38,278 | 48,327 | 54,930 | [Attica](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Attica) |
| 38 | [Katerini](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Katerini) | 43,613 | 50,510 | 54,735 | [Central Macedonia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Central_Macedonia) |
| 39 | [Kalamata](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kalamata) | 43,625 | 49,154 | 52,131 | [Peloponnese](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peloponnese) |
| 40 | [Trikala](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trikala) | 45,835 | 48,686 | 50,340 | [Thessaly](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thessaly) |
| 41 | [Xanthi](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Xanthi) | 37,430 | 45,111 | 49,856 | [East Macedonia and Thrace](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/East_Macedonia_and_Thrace) |
| 42 | [Lamia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lamia_(city)) | 44,084 | 46,406 | 47,649 | [Central Greece](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Central_Greece) |
| 43 | [*Irakleio*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Irakleio,_Attica)*1* | 42,905 | 45,926 | 47,540 | [Attica](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Attica) |
| 44 | [Komotini](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Komotini) | 37,036 | 43,326 | 46,847 | [East Macedonia and Thrace](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/East_Macedonia_and_Thrace) |
| 45 | [*Kifissia*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kifissia)*1* | 39,166 | 43,929 | 46,694 | [Attica](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Attica) |
| 46 | [*Sykies*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sykies)*2* | 34,059 | 41,726 | 46,670 | [Central Macedonia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Central_Macedonia) |
| 47 | [Veroia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Veroia) | 37,858 | 42,794 | 45,344 | [Central Macedonia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Central_Macedonia) |
| 48 | [*Chaidari*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chaidari)*1* | 44,831 | 45,227 | 45,269 | [Attica](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Attica) |
| 49 | [Drama](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Drama,_Greece) | 37,604 | 42,501 | 45,131 | [East Macedonia and Thrace](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/East_Macedonia_and_Thrace) |
| 50 | [Agrinio](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Agrinio) | 39,368 | 42,390 | 44,082 | [West Greece](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/West_Greece) |
| 51 | [*Stavroupoli*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stavroupoli)*2* | 37,596 | 41,653 | 44,012 | [Central Macedonia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Central_Macedonia) |
| 52 | [*Alimos*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alimos)*1* | 32,024 | 38,047 | 41,784 | [Attica](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Attica) |
| 53 | [*Polichni*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Polichni)*2* | 27,894 | 36,146 | 41,730 | [Central Macedonia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Central_Macedonia) |
| 54 | [*Ampelokipoi*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ampelokipoi,_Thessaloniki)*2* | 40,093 | 41,302 | 41,206 | [Central Macedonia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Central_Macedonia) |
| 55 | [Kozani](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kozani) | 31,553 | 35,242 | 37,133 | [West Macedonia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/West_Macedonia) |
| 56 | [*Aspropyrgos*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aspropyrgos)*4* | 15,715 | 27,741 | 35,811 | [Attica](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Attica) |
| 57 | [*Agioi Anargyroi*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Agioi_Anargyroi)*1* | 30,739 | 32,957 | 34,147 | [Attica](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Attica) |
| 58 | [*Argyroupoli*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Argyroupoli)*1* | 31,530 | 33,158 | 33,981 | [Attica](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Attica) |
| 59 | [Karditsa](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Karditsa) | 30,067 | 32,031 | 33,156 | [Thessaly](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thessaly) |
| 60 | [Chios](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chios) | 22,894 | 23,779 | 32,700 | [North Aegean](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/North_Aegean) |
| 61 | [Nea Ionia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nea_Ionia,_Magnesia) | 27,904 | 30,804 | 32,601 | [Thessaly](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thessaly) |
| 62 | [*Vrilissia*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vrilissia)*1* | 16,571 | 25,582 | 32,589 | [Attica](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Attica) |
| 63 | [*Agia Varvara*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Agia_Varvara)*1* | 28,706 | 30,562 | 31,540 | [Attica](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Attica) |
| 64 | [Corinth](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Corinth) | 27,412 | 29,787 | 31,430 | [Peloponnese](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peloponnese) |
| 65 | [*Cholargos*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cholargos)*1* | 33,691 | 32,166 | 31,205 | [Attica](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Attica) |
| 66 | [*Voula*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Voula)*1* | 17,998 | 25,532 | 31,005 | [Attica](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Attica) |
| 67 | [Rethymno](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rethymno) | 23,420 | 27,868 | 30,955 | [Crete](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crete) |
| 68 | [Ptolemais](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ptolemais) | 25,125 | 28,679 | 30,754 | [West Macedonia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/West_Macedonia) |
| 69 | [*Neapoli*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Neapoli,_Thessaloniki)*2* | 30,568 | 29,995 | 30,106 | [Central Macedonia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Central_Macedonia) |
| 70 | [*Metamorfosi*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Metamorfosi)*1* | 21,052 | 26,448 | 29,980 | [Attica](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Attica) |
| 71 | [*Ano Liosia*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ano_Liosia)*1* | 21,397 | 26,423 | 29,661 | [Attica](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Attica) |
| 72 | [Mytilini](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mytilini) | 23,971 | 27,247 | 28,898 | [North Aegean](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/North_Aegean) |
| 73 | [Giannitsa](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Giannitsa) | 22,504 | 26,296 | 28,611 | [Central Macedonia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Central_Macedonia) |
| 74 | [*Eleusis*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eleusis)*4* | 22,793 | 25,863 | 27,673 | [Attica](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Attica) |
| 75 | [Salamis](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Salamis_Island)3 | 22,567 | 25,730 | 27,606 | [Attica](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Attica) |
| 76 | [Tripoli](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tripoli,_Greece) | 22,429 | 25,520 | 27,104 | [Peloponnese](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peloponnese) |
| 77 | [*Perama*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Perama)*1,3* | 24,119 | 25,720 | 26,567 | [Attica](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Attica) |
| 78 | [Kerkyra](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kerkyra) | 31,359 | 28,185 | 26,384 | [Ionian Islands](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ionian_Islands) |
| 79 | [*Kaisariani*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kaisariani)*1* | 26,701 | 26,323 | 26,005 | [Attica](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Attica) |
| 80 | [Argos](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Argos) | 21,901 | 24,239 | 25,529 | [Peloponnese](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peloponnese) |
| 81 | [*Kamatero*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kamatero)*1* | 17,410 | 22,234 | 25,439 | [Attica](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Attica) |
| 82 | [*Eleftherio-Kordelio*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eleftherio-Kordelio)*2* | 16,549 | 21,630 | 25,098 | [Central Macedonia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Central_Macedonia) |
| 83 | [Megara](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Megara) | 20,403 | 23,032 | 24,572 | [Attica](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Attica) |
| 84 | [*Melissia*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Melissia)*1* | 13,469 | 19,526 | 24,006 | [Attica](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Attica) |
| 85 | [*Pylaia*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pylaia)*2* | 20,785 | 22,744 | 23,865 | [Central Macedonia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Central_Macedonia) |
| 86 | [*Moschato*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moschato)*1* | 22,039 | 23,153 | 23,714 | [Attica](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Attica) |
| 87 | [*Nea Philadelphia*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nea_Philadelphia)*1* | 25,261 | 24,112 | 23,389 | [Attica](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Attica) |
| 88 | [*Dafni*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dafni,_Attica)*1* | 24,152 | 23,674 | 23,313 | [Attica](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Attica) |
| 89 | [*Artemis*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Artemida,_Attica)*4* | 9,485 | 17,391 | 22,825 | [Attica](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Attica) |
| 90 | [Thebes](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thebes,_Greece) | 19,505 | 21,211 | 22,413 | [Central Greece](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Central_Greece) |
| 91 | [Pyrgos](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pyrgos,_Elis) | 28,465 | 23,274 | 21,810 | [West Greece](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/West_Greece) |
| 92 | [Kilkis](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kilkis) | 12,139 | 17,430 | 21,024 | [Central Macedonia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Central_Macedonia) |
| 93 | [Levadeia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Levadeia) | 18,437 | 20,061 | 20,984 | [Central Greece](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Central_Greece) |
| 94 | [*Pefki*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pefki)*1* | 17,987 | 19,887 | 20,968 | [Attica](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Attica) |
| 95 | [Aigio](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aigio) | 22,178 | 21,061 | 20,435 | [West Greece](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/West_Greece) |
| 96 | [Amaliada](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amaliada) | 15,232 | 18,261 | 20,266 | [West Greece](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/West_Greece) |
| 97 | [Kos](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kos) | 14,714 | 17,890 | 19,956 | [South Aegean](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/South_Aegean) |
| 98 | [Naousa](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Naousa,_Imathia) | 19,794 | 19,870 | 19,878 | [Central Macedonia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Central_Macedonia) |
| 99 | [Arta](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arta,_Greece) | 19,087 | 19,435 | 19,582 | [Epirus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Epirus_(periphery)) |
| 100 | [Edessa](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edessa,_Greece) | 17,128 | 18,253 | 18,872 | [Central Macedonia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Central_Macedonia) |
| 101 | [*Elliniko*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elliniko)*1* | 13,517 | 16,740 | 18,823 | [Attica](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Attica) |
| 102 | [*Gerakas*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gerakas)*1* | 8,512 | 13,921 | 18,328 | [Attica](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Attica) |
| 103 | [*Koropi*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Koropi)*4* | 12,790 | 15,860 | 17,846 | [Attica](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Attica) |
| 104 | [Preveza](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Preveza) | 13,695 | 16,321 | 17,791 | [Epirus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Epirus_(periphery)) |
| 105 | [*Panorama*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Panorama,_Thessaloniki)*5* | 10,275 | 14,552 | 17,670 | [Central Macedonia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Central_Macedonia) |
| 106 | [*Peraia*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peraia,_Thessaloniki)*5* | 2,949 | 13,306 | 17,617 | [Central Macedonia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Central_Macedonia) |
| 107 | [*Oraiokastro*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oraiokastro)*5* | 5,458 | 11,896 | 17,029 | [Central Macedonia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Central_Macedonia) |
| 108 | [*Nea Erythraia*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nea_Erythraia)*1* | 12,993 | 15,439 | 16,957 | [Attica](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Attica) |
| 109 | [Orestiada](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Orestiada) | 12,691 | 15,246 | 16,747 | [East Macedonia and Thrace](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/East_Macedonia_and_Thrace) |
| 110 | [*Thermi*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thermi)*5* | 5,156 | 11,360 | 16,338 | [Central Macedonia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Central_Macedonia) |
| 111 | [*Kalyvia Thorikou*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kalyvia_Thorikou)*4* | 7,357 | 12,202 | 16,193 | [Attica](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Attica) |
| 112 | [*Pallini*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pallini)*1* | 8,021 | 12,552 | 16,117 | [Attica](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Attica) |
| 113 | [*Menemeni*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Menemeni)*2* | 12,932 | 14,910 | 16,116 | [Central Macedonia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Central_Macedonia) |
| 114 | [Sparta](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sparta_(municipality)) | 13,011 | 14,817 | 15,851 | [Peloponnese](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peloponnese) |
| 115 | [*Agios Ioannis Rentis*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Agios_Ioannis_Rentis)*1,3* | 14,218 | 15,060 | 15,497 | [Attica](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Attica) |
| 116 | [Florina](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florina) | 12,355 | 14,279 | 15,250 | [West Macedonia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/West_Macedonia) |
| 117 | [*Nea Makri*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nea_Makri)*4* | 12,120 | 13,986 | 15,108 | [Attica](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Attica) |
| 118 | [*Paiania*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paiania)*4* | 9,710 | 12,855 | 15,012 | [Attica](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Attica) |

**Natural Resources**: Lignite, petroleum, iron ore, bauxite, lead, zinc, nickel, magnetite, marble, salt, hydropower

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Mountains of Greece** | | | |
| Name | Geographical Region | | Height (m) |
| Olympos | Macedonia | | 2.904 |
| Smolikas | Macedonia | | 2.631 |
| Grammos | Macedonia | | 2.521 |
| Voras | Macedonia | | 2.519 |
| Giona | Sterea Ellada | | 2.507 |
| Tymfi (Gamila) | Epirus | | 2.499 |
| Parnassos | Sterea Ellada | | 2.455 |
| Idi (Psiloritis) | Crete | | 2.454 |
| Lefka Ori | Crete | | 2.454 |
| Athamanon Ori | Epirus | | 2.429 |
| Vardoussia | Sterea Ellada | | 2.413 |
| Taygetos | Peloponnese | | 2.404 |
| Kyllini | Peloponnese | | 2.374 |
| Aroania | Peloponnese | | 2.338 |
| Varnous | Macedonia | | 2.329 |
| Tymfristos | Sterea Ellada | | 2.312 |
| Lakmos | Epirus | | 2.294 |
| Pindos (Ligos) | Epirus | | 2.249 |
|  |  | |  |
| Major Lakes |  | |  |
|  |  | |  |
| Name | Geographical Region | | Area (km2) |
| Trichonis | Sterea Ellada | | 95,840 |
| Volvi | Macedonia | | 70,353 |
| Vegoritis | Macedonia | | 54,311 |
| Bistonis | Thraki | | 45,030 |
| Koronia | Macedonia | | 42,823 |
| Mikri Prespa | Macedonia | | 42,541 |
| Megali Prespa | Macedonia | | 39,040 |
| Kerkini | Macedonia | | 37,688 |
| Kastoria | Macedonia | | 28,655 |
| Ioannina | Epirus | | 19,470 |
| Iliki | Sterea Ellada | | 19,118 |
| Doiranis | Macedonia | | 15,350 |
| Amvrakia | Sterea Ellada | | 14,477 |
| Lisimachia | Sterea Ellada | | 13,085 |
| Petron | Macedonia | | 12,294 |
| **Rivers of Greece** | | | | |
| River | | Length (km) | | |
| Aliakmon | | 297 | | |
| Acheloos | | 220 | | |
| Pinios (Thessalia) | | 205 | | |
| Evros (\*) | | 204 | | |
| Nestos (\*) | | 130 | | |
| Strymonas (\*) | | 118 | | |
| Thiamis | | 115 | | |
| Alfios | | 110 | | |
| Arachthos | | 110 | | |
| Enipefs | | 84 | | |
| Evrotas | | 82 | | |
| Assopos | | 80 | | |
| Louros | | 80 | | |
| Sperchios | | 80 | | |
| Megdovas | | 78 | | |
| Axios (\*) | | 76 | | |
| Aoos (\*) | | 70 | | |
| Gallikos | | 70 | | |
| Ladonas | | 70 | | |
| Mornos | | 70 | | |
| Pinios (Peloponissos) | | 70 | | |

**Currency**

Greece's monetary unit is the Euro. No other currency is accepted and it is best to exchange dollars or other currency at a bank. The exchange rates are all the same throughout the country and you exchange money at a bank or official exchange shop where you will get the best running rates. I have noticed that the rates at the airport seem to favor the bank, so I usually just exchange enough money for a couple of days until I get to a bank. Banks are open from 9:00 AM until 2:00 PM. At the new airport near the luggage pickup you can find machines that can exchange foreign currency and return Euro. Very nice indeed since you need the Euro for a luggage cart.

It goes without saying that if you come from any European Union country you would not have to worry about exchanging any money since the Euro is the common currency of the European Union (but you The clothing and footwear market in Greece is facing the increasing presence of well-known international manufacturers. Major players like Zara, Marks & Spencer, Nike and Puma are taking steps to further strengthen their name and expand their network while others are making their entry, with the Swedish H&M being the most recent example. As a result, a much anticipated battle for market shares is on the cards.

In this changing environment, local players are being forced to shift their focus towards developing a satisfactory retail network, investing in franchising and advertising to build stronger awareness of their brands and even pursuing the acquisition of new brands under exclusive license agreements with foreign manufacturers. The rule is simple and those that follow it should survive the increased competition while those that do not have the capacity to adjust to the market's demands are likely to be forced out of business sooner or later.

**Development of Retail Chains and Shopping Centres**

The clothing and footwear market in Greece is characterised by the continuous development of local and international retail chains leading to a dramatic loss of competitive advantage for independent retailers. These chains have the financial power to drive price-competition to levels small, family-operated shops are unable to match. The damage for the latter is expected to further expand due to the recent and future operation of a number of big shopping centres (malls), which only the major branded retail players can afford to have a presence in.

**Brand Awareness**

In the period under review and especially in the last 3-4 years, the clothing and footwear market focused on brand awareness. Consumers are becoming more interested in labelled products and this includes not only famous expensive brands but also cheaper brands that developed extensive retail networks as they are perceived to offer relatively higher quality than no-name products and good value for money, a very appealing combination to today's more price-sensitive consumer.

**Future Prospects**

In the years to come, it is expected that the Greek clothing and footwear market will continue to be driven by the demand for branded products and high value-for-money. In addition, it is expected to experience a further consolidation and domination by a limited number of retailers that will develop a large number of sales points all over the country. A great part should also be played by franchising and by organised shopping malls and large department stores, the latest trend in the Greek retail market. Overall, the clothing and footwear retail map is changing and margins, shares and channels will be redistributed.It is hardly surprising that Athens, the capital city of Greece, is crammed full of spectacular landmarks and monuments. Famous throughout the world, many of these date back over 2,000 years and are in remarkable condition, thanks to faithful restoration and reconstruction work. Here are some of the top landmarks in Athens to visit.  **Athens Landmarks: Temple of Olympian Zeus** - Vassilissis Olgas Avenue, Athens 105 57, Greece Tel: +30 210 922 6330 The enormous Temple of Olympian Zeus in Athens was built around 1,500 years ago for the worship of the Greek God Zeus and there was once a large gold and ivory statue of Zeus inside. In the 4th century the Temple of Olympian Zeus was destroyed by invaders and the impressive ruins serve to remind visitors of the grandeur that was once present at this site. Only some of the original 104 Corinthian columns remain. The nearest Metro Stop is the Akropoli Station. Landmark open: Tuesday to Sunday - 08:30 to 15:00

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Greece is a mountainous land with rugged terrain and diverse geomorpho- logical formations, which fact, in conjunction with its geographical location and climatic environment, creates favorable conditions for the growth and proliferation of forests.  In Greek Forests exist important and very beautiful woods of conifers (pine, fir) and deciduous trees (oak, beech, maple and others) covering large areas (34 million hectares), 25% of the land mass of Greece) on most of the country's mountain masses, from **Taygetos**, **Vitina, Ossa, Olympos**, **Pindos, to Gramos, Vermion** and **Rodopi**. These forests constitute a precious natural heritage, not just for Greece but for the whole of Europe. Largely unspoilt, they provide a habitat for the evolution and survival of a large number of species of wild fauna and flora. It is estimated that, in terms of biological variety, the natural flora of Greece is second only to that of the Iberian peninsula in Europe, while the country's wildlife also enjoys an enviable position, both the mammals and, primarily, the birds, whether indigenous to the Greek Forests or migrating to them. | Mount Taygetos, Messinia, Peloponnese |
|  | |

In Greek Forests exist important and very beautiful woods of conifers (pine, fir) and deciduous trees (oak, beech, maple and others) covering large areas (34 million hectares), 25% of the land mass of Greece) on most of the country's mountain masses, from **Taygetos**, **Vitina, Ossa, Olympos**, **Pindos, to Gramos, Vermion** and **Rodopi**. These forests constitute a precious natural heritage, not just for Greece but for the whole of Europe. Largely unspoilt, they provide a habitat for the evolution and survival of a large number of species of wild fauna and flora. It is estimated that, in terms of biological variety, the natural flora of Greece is second only to that of the Iberian peninsula in Europe, while the country's wildlife also enjoys an enviable position, both the mammals and, primarily, the birds, whether indigenous to the Greek Forests or migrating to them.A net-work of protected forests has been founded, in which the national forest parks of **Parnitha, Sounion, Parnassos, Ainos, Iti, Prespes, Samaria, Vikos-Aoos, Olympos** occupy a prominent place. In addition to their protective role, these constitute poles of attraction for visitors with varied interests.

The picturesque forests of Greece (the palm forest at Vai in Crete, the woods on the island of Skiathos, the straits of the river Nestos, etc.), the virgin forests (Rodopi), as well as the scheduled monuments of nature (the Haidou Forest of Xanthi, the wood of dendroid broad-leafed evergreens on the island of Sapientza, etc.) play their part in the conservation of the natural environment. The network of protected regions is completed by those earmarked to play a specialized role in the conservation and development of the natural environment of Greece. These include the Dadia Forest on the banks of the Evros, where a large number of rare and nowadays endangered birds of prey (imperial eagle, osprey, black vulture, etc.)